

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED **MAY 16 1988**
DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC **White Sands National Monument Historic District**

AND/OR COMMON

White Sands National Monument Headquarters Area

2 LOCATION

15 miles southwest of Alamogordo on U.S. 70/82

STREET & NUMBER

n/a NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Alamogordo

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

STATE

New Mexico

CODE
35

COUNTY

Otero

CODE

035

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT
 BUILDING(S)
 STRUCTURE
 SITE
 OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC
 PRIVATE
 BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS
 BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

OCCUPIED
 UNOCCUPIED
 WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
 YES: RESTRICTED
 YES: UNRESTRICTED
 NO

PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE
 COMMERCIAL
 EDUCATIONAL
 ENTERTAINMENT
 GOVERNMENT
 INDUSTRIAL
 MILITARY
 MUSEUM
 PARK
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE
 RELIGIOUS
 SCIENTIFIC
 TRANSPORTATION
 OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (if applicable)

National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 728

CITY, TOWN

Santa Fe

n/a VICINITY OF

STATE

New Mexico 87501

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Same as #4

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE **List of Classified Structures Inventory**

DATE

7/86

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

National Park Service, Southwest Regional Office -PCH

CITY, TOWN

Santa Fe

STATE

New Mexico

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

White Sands National Monument Historic District comprises an ensemble of buildings which serves as the monument headquarters: a visitor center with separate comfort station, flanked on opposite sides by maintenance and employee housing complexes of four buildings each, plus several trailers and temporary metal sheds. The architectural ensemble originally consisted of eight stuccoed adobe Pueblo Revival Style buildings erected in the 1930s. The eight buildings are extant and they largely retain their original integrity: the Museum and Administration Building, comfort station, three residences and three maintenance structures. A residence and a maintenance building, both visually compatible, were added to the respective complexes in more recent years. The buildings and groups of buildings are united by stuccoed walls, roads, walkways and plantings, most of which were laid out in the original plans. The landscaping is with native plants and was established when the buildings were constructed on the desert site in New Mexico's Tularosa Basin. The large white gypsum dunes of the monument form a backdrop for the assemblage of buildings.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1940	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) WPA public work program	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES **1933-35; 1936-40** BUILDER/ARCHITECT **various**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The White Sands National Monument Historic District consists of an architectural ensemble containing eight administrative, visitor, and service structures that are architecturally and historically significant under both Criteria A and C as fine examples of the Pueblo Revival Style erected during the Depression years through the cooperative efforts of the National Park Service and the Works Progress Administration public work program. Built between 1936 and 1940, the buildings and associated landscaped features are significant under both criteria as properties achieving significance within the past 50 years because of exceptional importance both as illustrative of National Park Service stylistic architectural development prior to World War II, and as examples of public work projects. The buildings were designed by National Park Service architects, principally Lyle E. Bennett and Robert W. Albers, and constructed by relief workers as a Recreational Demonstration Project under the Civil Works Administration. They are excellent examples of the adaptation of historical southwestern building styles and materials to the "rustic" mode popular for park architecture in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and are notable for their expressive design, sensitivity to the environment, use of natural materials, and hand-crafted uniqueness of form, texture and detail. Set in a landscaping of native plants, the assemblage largely preserves the original plans of the architects and landscape architects, as well as the fine craftsmanship of the workers.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation sheets.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 10

UTM REFERENCES

A

1,3	39,0	44,0	36	2,73,0,0
ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	

B

1,3	39,0	1,8,0	3,6	2,71,0,0
ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	

C

1,3	39,0	0,8,0	3,6	2,726,0
ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	

D

1,3	39,0	3,4,0	3,6	2,74,4,0
ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE n/a CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE n/a CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Betsy Swanson, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION n/a

DATE July, 1986

STREET & NUMBER 825 Calle Mejia #1223

TELEPHONE (505) 982-5698

CITY OR TOWN Santa Fe

STATE New Mexico 87501

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES XX

NO

NONE

Justification of exceptional significance See letter this date. Tom W. Hill 4-22-88
is not appropriate. See letter this date. STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is State National State Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE Edwin C. Beaman

TITLE Chief Historian

DATE May 16, 1988

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Reth Boland
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 6/23/88

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Otero County, Alamogordo vicinity
White Sands National Monument Historic District

Situated in the Tularosa Basin of southern New Mexico, and ringed by the San Andres, Organ, Sierra Blanca, and Sacramento Mountains, White Sands National Monument preserves 230 square miles of the world's largest gypsum dune field. The great gleaming white dunes rise from the desert floor vegetated with saltbush, yucca and other shrubs and cacti, and populated with creatures especially adapted to the harsh environment. A 16-mile round-trip scenic drive begins on the desert plain at the visitor center on Highway U.S. 70/82 and winds into the dunes.

The visitor center consists of a museum, refreshment and souvenir shop, and administrative offices in one large building, with a small adjacent building housing a comfort station. Symmetrically located on either side of the visitor center are service building complexes. To the northeast of the visitor center is the employee residential complex consisting of four houses, two house trailers, and a small metal shed. To the southwest of the visitor center is the maintenance building complex consisting of four structures and two small metal sheds. The complexes are united by roads, walkways, walls, and plantings, as well as by the uniformity of their architectural style and treatment.

The buildings homogeneously reflect the Pueblo Revival Style, with low, flat, horizontal forms, contoured edges, plain surfaces, and a single muted color. All of eight original buildings are constructed of stuccoed adobe. Two buildings erected in more recent years are stuccoed to resemble stuccoed adobe. The museum building forms a central mass of rectangular shapes and rises in part to two stories. It is balanced on either side by small scale buildings clustered about courts or plaza-like open spaces. The building clusters have, from a distance, the aspect of small Mexican villages.

According to the original design for the layout of the buildings, the maintenance buildings face a square asphalted court partially ringed by a wall. The wall is attached to the sides of the buildings and is constructed of stuccoed adobe, except for a reconstructed stuccoed concrete block portion on the southeast side of the court.

Also according to original design, the residential buildings are located around a circular gravel drive. In the

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Otero County, Alamogordo vicinity
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center of the circle is a grassy plot enclosed by a post-and-rail fence. A low, stuccoed wall partially surrounds the visitor center parking lot facing the highway. This asphalt parking lot dates from the original layout of the buildings. Another asphalted parking lot was constructed at the rear of the visitor center in 1985-6.

Most of the roadways and walkways date from the original building layout as shown in the original plans. A walkway from the visitor center to the residential area passes through an original carved wooden gate in an arch in the stuccoed adobe wall of the front parking lot. Also dating from the original design layout are roadways at the rear of the visitor center that lead to the maintenance and residential complexes.

The monument entrance road, leading from the highway and through the headquarters area to the dunes, was originally routed through a narrow passage between the museum building and the comfort station. A log canopy or open portal originally crossed over the roadway and connected the two buildings. It was supported by a log post with zapatas (carved corbels) positioned in the center of the roadway between the entrance and exit lanes. A ranger stationed under the portal in a doorway of the visitor center greeted vehicles. Most of the portal was removed years ago. For safety reasons, the entry-exit road was rerouted from the passage between the buildings to the west side of the comfort station in 1985-6. At the same time, a concrete pedestrian walkway was constructed to replace the asphalt roadway between the buildings.

Cottonwoods are native to the dunes area, occasionally taking root in the dunes singularly or in scattered groves. They were chosen by National Park Service District Landscape Architect Charles A. Richey to shade the buildings and walkways at White Sands. Once established, the trees grew without irrigation because of the high water table in the area. To aid the landscaping, good soil was hauled to the Headquarters area and spread over the ground. Native ground cover of the region, which had been largely destroyed during construction, was then re-established. A photograph of 1939 in the files of White Sands National Monument shows that cottonwood saplings had been planted in the residential area and near the museum building, where large cottonwoods grow today.¹

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A photograph of 1943 in the White Sands National Monument files shows that a cactus garden had been planted in the location of the present cactus garden in front of the visitor center. The old photograph shows some of the same species of native plants growing in the garden today, such as Lechuguilla, Ocotilla, cholla, yucca, and sotol.

The appearance of the buildings and landscaping of the headquarters area today largely reflects the original plans and designs of the NPS architects and landscape architects. Some small additions have been made to several of the buildings, and some of their decorative trim has been removed. The removal of the open wood portal that originally connected the Museum-Administration Building to the comfort station severed the horizontal relationship that unified the mass of the separate buildings.

Two structures were erected in more recent years. A house was built in the residential complex in 1963-5, and a flammables storage building was built in the maintenance complex in 1982. Their designs are simplified suggestions of the Pueblo Revival and their exteriors are stuccoed to blend with the original stuccoed adobe buildings. The newer buildings visually contribute to the sense of enclosure in their respective complexes.

Several metal sheds and trailers have also been added to the setting. However, the greatest dissimilarity between the overall appearance of the headquarters area today and its appearance in old photographs is the color of the buildings. Today, the buildings are stuccoed in a light beige color which blends the structures visually with the sandy landscape. Old photographs show that the buildings were originally stuccoed in a darker color, identified in the building contract specifications as a "buff-brown." This darker color emphasized the sense of mass, weight, and volume in the forms of the buildings, and delineated the structures against the surrounding scrub desert and the snow-white dunes on the horizon.²

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Otero County, Alamogordo vicinity
White Sands National Monument Historic District

* SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS:

1. Administration and Museum Building, NPS Building #20, designed in 1936 by NPS architect Lyle E. Bennett under the direction of Deputy Chief Architect W. G. Carnes of the Western Division of the Branch of Plans and Design in San Francisco; built 1936-7 by Civil Works Administration workers as a Recreational Demonstration Project and an Emergency Conservation Work Project.

Pueblo Revival Style; two-stories; rambling, L-shaped plan measuring about 100' x 90' and having 10 rooms on the ground level; battered, beige-colored stuccoed adobe walls 2' to 3' thick; flat parapeted asphalt roof recently covered with polyurethane foam; projecting wooden vigas and canales; portals supported by log posts with zapatas inset in front facade and along two sides of rear patio; small wooden projecting and casemented windows of ~~4~~ lites in each sash; principal doors are multi-lite French style casements; concrete foundation and concrete, tile and wood floors.

Interior refinements include corner fireplaces; wall niches; exposed viga and latia ceilings; furnishings in the New Mexican Colonial Style; painted, cut and hammered tin light fixtures and switch plates in the New Mexican tradition; carved and painted corbels; adzed wood trim; adzed wooden paneled doors. The interior walls are cement plastered. The entrance foyer has a coved plaster ceiling. The portal ceilings contain exposed vigas and latias excepting where false ceilings have been installed for bat control. The portals have floors of scored concrete. The patio is surfaced with cobblestones set in cement mortar. The patio is enclosed on two sides by portals set in the "L" of the building and on two sides by a low stuccoed adobe wall. Near the center of the patio is a circular concrete planter. Native plants grow in the patio.

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Administration and Museum Building, continued:

The rooms at the southwest corner of the building were the first to be constructed, in 1936-7. These were, on the ground floor, the ranger office, clerical office, entrance foyer, lobby, and storage room, with front portal; and on the second level, the naturalist's office. The second level consisted of a partially open balcony space overlooking the lobby. This arrangement is in the Mission Revival tradition and was derived from the church nave and choir loft. The second level is reached by a stairway with a carved baluster, also in the Mission Revival tradition. The baluster design is repeated in the railing of the balcony which is supported by an arched lintel and corbels. In 1966, most of the open balcony space was enclosed with frame and sheetrock partitions to enclose two rooms for the naturalist's office and naturalist's workroom.

The original display cases and exhibits in the lobby were replaced by new ones designed in 1976 by Felix Stephen Gula, Associates of New York. Decorative wall murals in the lobby date from this installation.

French style casement doors leading from the foyer to the offices were removed and replaced with a small door. The offices remain largely unchanged except for the addition of fluorescent lights and carpeting. They contain corner fireplaces, vigas, wall niches, and New Mexican Colonial Style furniture.

In 1937, the building was enlarged following designs by architect Bennett. An addition was made to the northeast end of the building consisting of two museum exhibit rooms, and an addition was made to the northwest end of the building consisting of an office, a photo lab, and a workroom. The exhibit rooms are unchanged except for carpeting, handicapped access ramps, and heating/cooling ducts. The workroom located at the end of the northwest wing addition later served as the concessionaire's shop. The shop space was enlarged by an additional 18' x 29' extension at the northwest end constructed in 1964, by Daniel Engineering Company of Alamogordo. The design and detailing of the

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Administration and Museum Building, continued;

more recent addition repeats that of the original building.

The rear portals were erected with the 1937 additions. The patio design and plantings were laid out by Landscape Architect Charles Richey in 1938. His design called for plantings of yucca, chamiso, and native wildflowers such as grow in the patio today.

The building has been restuccoed several times but is little changed in appearance and is in good condition.

2. Comfort Station, NPS Building #21, designed in 1936 by NPS architect Lyle E. Bennett under the direction of Deputy Chief Architect W. G. Carnes of the Western Division of the Branch of Plans and Design; built in 1936-7 by Civil Works Administration workers as a Recreational Demonstration Project.

Pueblo Revival Style; one-story; rectangular plan measuring about 46' x 21' with 6 rooms, several of which are entry alcoves; battered, beige-colored, stuccoed adobe walls with buttressed corners; flat parapeted asphalt roof; projecting wooden vigas and canales; concrete foundations and floors; small projecting wooden windows with 4 lites each; doors of adzed wooden panels joined by mortise and tenon and containing carved wooden grilles. The interior walls were originally cement plastered, excepting the adobe brick walls of a narrow utility room between the men's and women's rooms. The walls of the men's and women's rooms are now covered with fiber board panels colored white, grey, and gold. The ceilings contain Douglas fir vigas and aspen latias. The original decorative cut-tin light fixtures hang from the ceiling.

Originally, the comfort station was connected to the museum and administration building by a wooden canopy or open portal. It consisted of heavy lintels supported by a central log post and decorative corbels, and covered with 12" vigas resting side-by-side. The portal provided a covered walkway between the two buildings, across the entrance/exit road to the dunes. The portal proved

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Comfort Station, continued:

to be set too low to accommodate the passage of all vehicles, so architect Bennett redesigned it in 1944. The lintel was raised, the existing corbels were revised in appearance and a second layer of corbels was placed on top of the original corbels. Subsequently, the center part of the canopy was removed, leaving only small segments supported by corbels attached to the buildings.

The entrance to the men's room was originally located at the east end of the building, under the portal and facing the roadway. With the increase in vehicular traffic in later years, the close proximity of the door to the road was considered dangerous. In 1978, the opening of the door was closed and the men's entrance was relocated to the position of an existing window on the northwest side of the building. A corbelled log canopy was placed over the new door.

The building was restuccoed in recent years, at which time the adzed wooden lintels over the doors and windows were stuccoed over. The alterations do not detract from the original character of the building. The building is in good condition.

3. Utility Building, NPS Building # 31A & B, original structure, #31B, is northwest three-quarters of building, designed in 1936 by an NPS architect with the initials "S.D." under the direction of Deputy Chief Architect W. G. Carnes of the Western Division of the Branch of Plans and Design in San Francisco, and erected in that year by Civil Works Administration workers as a Recreation Demonstration Project; southeast end of building added in 1937 as a powerhouse, also by the workers as a Recreation Demonstration Project; entire building functions today as a garage and maintenance workshop.

Pueblo Revival Style; one-story; rectangular plan measuring 82' x 31'; battered walls of beige-colored, stuccoed adobe, flat asphalted roof with undulating parapet; concrete floors and foundation. The original 1936 structure has large openings framed by columns with zapatas supporting heavy adzed lintels. These openings originally

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Utility Building, NPS Building #31A & B, continued:

contained sliding garage doors composed of wooden panels with diagonal boards. The original wooden doors were recently replaced by swing-up metal doors.

The former powerhouse structure, which was adjoined to the southeast end of the building in 1937, measures 16' x 20'. It contains in the court facade an original French style door with diagonal boards, surmounted by a transom with 3 lites. In the east end is a steel pivoted window with 6 lites. This addition projects slightly into the court, as does the bay at the opposite end of the building. Vigas and canales originally projected from the sides and rear of the building. The vigas at the sides were structural roof beams that were extended through the walls; those at the rear were decorative. The vigas and all but several canales were removed when the roof was repaired and the building was restuccoed in 1954.

The floors and foundations are concrete. The building is in good condition.

4. Gas and Oil Building, NPS Building #30, designed in 1937 by NPS architect Robert W. Albers and Lyle E. Bennett of the Western Division of the Branch of Plans and Design, San Francisco; built in the same year by Civil Works Administration workers as a Recreation Demonstration Project;

Pueblo Revival; one-story; rectangular plan having 2 rooms and measuring 22' x 11'; battered walls of beige-colored stuccoed adobe; flat concrete slab roof with stuccoed adobe parapet and one canal projecting at the rear; two entrances on front facade containing original ~~sized~~ vertical board doors with original wrought-iron hardware; steel pivoted windows with 6 lites and 4 lites and concrete lintels (not visible under the stucco); floors and foundations concrete.

The structure was formerly fronted by an adobe walled court or patio having about the same dimensions as the building. The patio held an oil storage tank, and a gasoline pump was situated immediately outside of the patio wall. A compressor pump is housed in the building.

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Gas and Oil Building, continued:

The original wall stucco was removed and replaced in 1954. The building is in good condition.

5. Warehouse and Laundry, NPS Building #32, designed in 1938 by NPS architect Robert W. Albers under the direction of Thomas Vint, Chief of Planning, Western Division, San Francisco; erected in 1939 by Civil Works Administration workers as a Recreation Demonstration Project; now used as Maintenance office and workroom.

Pueblo Revival; one-story; rectangular plan measuring about 68' x 25' and having two rooms; battered walls of beige colored stuccoed adobe; flat asphalted roof with stuccoed adobe parapet; concrete floors and foundation.

Except for one wooden canale draining the roof at the rear, the vigas and canales that originally projected near the roof line have been removed. The steel windows are original. They consist of 3 pivoted windows with 6 lites each in the rear facade, 2-6 lite pivoted and 1-8 lite casement in the front facade, 1-6 lite casement in the southeast end, and two windows in the northwest end each having a fixed sash of 6 lites and a pivoted sash of 6 lites.

An original door of vertical boards and 4 fixed lites in the upper half remains in the rear facade. A narrow vertical board door also remains on the front facade. The two other doors on the front facade are wooden replacements.

The interior walls are plastered and the ceilings contain exposed vigas covered by tongue and groove planks. Originally, there was a yard for drying clothes enclosed with a wooden fence at the rear of the laundry room, at the southwest corner of the building. In 1949, the laundry room was converted into living quarters for the maintenance supervisor, according to plans by NPS Regional Architect Lyle E. Bennett. This room is now used as the maintenance office and the warehouse room is now used as a workroom and store-room.

The building has been restuccoed. In 1983, small solar panels, hardly visible from the ground, were added to the

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Warehouse and Laundry, continued:

roof. The building is in good condition.

6. Residence, NPS Building #1, designed in 1936 by NPS architect Lyle E. Bennett of the Branch of Plans and Design, Western Division, San Francisco; built in 1937 by Civil Works Administration workers as an Emergency Conservation Work Project and as a Recreation Demonstration Project.

Pueblo Revival Style; one-story; irregular plan measuring in greatest dimensions about 57' x 45' and consisting of 5 rooms plus kitchen and bath; nearly identical in plan and elevation to Residence Building #2; beige-colored, battered, stuccoed adobe walls; flat parapeted roof originally asphalted and now covered with polyurethane foam; projecting wooden vigas and canales.

The canales are halved logs hollowed out. Inset entrance portal with heavy adzed lintel supported by carved brackets (zapatas) at the southeast corner of the house. The entrance door is original with adzed wooden panels and carved grille. The ceiling of the portal contains exposed vigas. At the rear southwest corner of the house is a patio enclosed by a stuccoed adobe wall with a wooden gate. Over the rear windows are stuccoed adobe hoods supported by small logs. The rear multi-lite door is original. The original wooden sliding windows have been replaced with metal sliding windows.

The interior walls are cement plastered, the floors are tile, wood and cement, and the foundations are concrete. The ceilings contain vigas and latias. A utility room was added to the north corner of the building in 1961. It was built upon the stuccoed adobe walls of an original patio that measured 12' x 18'. The walls were raised with concrete blocks and plastered over with cement stucco. A plywood door, fronted by a screen door, was placed in the northeast (front) facade of the new room, and a sliding aluminum window was installed in the northwest side wall of the room.

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Residence, NPS Building #1, continued:

Small solar panels were added to the roof of the house in 1982. A vertical board garage was built near the northwest end of the building at some time subsequent to the construction of the house. The building was restuccoed about 1950. It is in good condition.

7. Residence, NPS Building #2, designed in 1936 by NPS architect Lyle E. Bennett of the Branch of Plans and Design, Western Division, San Francisco; built in 1937 by Civil Works Administration workers as an Emergency Conservation Work Project and as a Recreation Demonstration Project.

Pueblo Revival Style; one-story; irregular plan measuring in greatest dimensions about 57' x 45' consisting of 5 rooms plus kitchen and bath; nearly identical in plan and elevation to Building #1; beige-colored battered, stuccoed adobe walls; flat parapeted roof originally asphalted and now covered with polyurethane foam; projecting wooden vigas and canales. The canales are halved hollow logs. Inset entrance portal with heavy adzed lintels supported by zapatas at south corner of house has a viga ceiling but, for purpose of bat control, the vigas have been covered with plywood boards sprayed with stucco. The entrance door is original, with adzed wooden panels and carved, jig-saw grille.

At the rear northwest corner of the house is a patio enclosed by a stuccoed adobe wall entered by a wooden gate. The rear multi-lite door is original. Over the rear windows are stuccoed adobe hoods supported by small logs. The windows contain the original wood sliding frames, but they have been covered with sliding aluminum storm windows.

The interior walls are cement plastered, the floors are tile, wood and concrete, and the foundations are concrete. Vigas are exposed at the ceilings. The plastered kitchen ceiling is coved between the vigas. The original appearance of the living room is well preserved with a large corner fireplace, adzed beams and lintels, and diagonal plank doors. A utility room was added to the northeast corner of the building in 1961. It was built upon the adobe walls of an

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Residence, NPS Building #2, continued:

original patio measuring 12' x 18'. The walls were built up with concrete blocks and stuccoed over. A plywood and a screen door were placed in the southeast (front) facade of the new room, and a sliding aluminum window was installed in the northeast side wall of the room. A wooden carport was built near the northeast corner of the building in 1977 to replace an earlier carport built at sometime subsequent to the construction of the house. The building was restuccoed about 1950. It is in good condition.

8. Superintendent's Residence, NPS Building #3, designed in 1937 by NPS architect Lyle E. Bennett of the Branch of Plans and Design, Western Division, San Francisco, under the direction of Deputy Chief Architect W. G. Carnes; built 1938-9 by Civil Works Administration workers as a Recreation Demonstration Project.

Pueblo Revival Style; one-story; irregular in plan, measuring at greatest dimensions about 60' by 45' and consisting of 5 rooms plus kitchen and bath; beige colored battered stuccoed adobe walls; flat parapeted roof originally asphalted and now covered with polyurethane foam; chimneys of stuccoed adobe.

The front, or southeast, facade is fronted by a portal and an adobe walled patio. The portal is heavily embellished with vigas, canales of halved hollow logs, and zapatas on the log support columns. The portal is walled on the north-west end and in the wall is a large window containing a grille of 2½" thick aspens. The original entrance under the portal has been replaced with large sliding aluminum frame glass doors. Over the rear entrance of the house is a stuccoed adobe hood supported by logs. The rear door is a wood and glass replacement.

A high-walled patio projects from the rear, or north-west, facade of the house. A wooden entrance gate is set in an arched opening in the stuccoed adobe wall. In 1958-9, a 12' x 14' room, called a "service porch," containing floor to ceiling cabinets, was erected in the north half of the rear patio, incorporating the northern patio walls. The walls of the room were raised with concrete blocks on the

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Superintendent's Residence, NPS Building #3, continued:

adobe patio walls, and the whole was plastered with cement stucco. The addition blends with the style and fabric of the rest of the house. The original steel multi-lite windows were replaced in recent years with single pane sliding metal windows, with the exception of a metal casement window in the 1958-9 addition.

The interior walls are cement plastered. The ceilings contain exposed vigas. The floors are wood, tile and concrete, and the foundations are concrete. The livingroom fireplace has been altered. Small solar panels, which are barely visible from the ground, were added to the roof in 1982. A wooden carport was erected near the north corner of the house in 1958-9, and it was replaced with a new one in 1977. The building is in good condition.

*** SUPPORTING BUILDINGS:**

9. Residence, Building #4, designed in 1963, plans signed by NPS architects "Standard" and "C.R.S.," built 1963-5 as a "Mission-66" building project; now used as ranger office;

Simplified Pueblo Revival Style; one-story; rectangular in plan measuring about 55' x 25', having 5 rooms with kitchen and 1½ baths; beige-colored stucco over frame construction; flat parapeted asphalted roof; aluminum double-hung windows having 6/6 lites; wooden entrance door glazed at top with 8 lites; wooden carport attached to southwest end; interior walls plywood panels. The building is in good condition. It contributes to the sense of enclosure of the circular court ~~and~~ plaza formed by the three original residences.

10. Paint Shop and Flammables Storage Building, NPS Bldg #45, designed in 1982 by Sam Romero, Division of Maintenance, NPS Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe; built in the same year by Sanford Construction Company, contractors.

Simplified Pueblo Revival Style; one-story; stuccoed concrete block walls painted beige; rectangular plan of two rooms, measuring 12' x 26'; flat asphalted, parapeted roof;

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Paint Shop and **Flammables Storage Building, NPS Bldg #45,**
Continued:

concrete floor and foundation; small metal windows; metal door; exhaust fans and louvered vents at sides of building. Built to house flammables separately. The structure is in excellent condition. It contributes to the sense of enclosure of the maintenance court or plaza formed by the three original buildings.

*NON-CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES:

11. House trailer, NPS Building #12, set up in monument on this site about 1970, rectangular, measuring about 12' x 44', metal and wood construction. Used as a residence.
12. House trailer, NPS Building #13, set up in monument on this site about 1982, rectangular, measuring about 14' x 60', metal and wood construction. Used as a residence.
13. Storage shed for residential area, pre-fabricated metal, rectangular, measuring about 10' x 12'. Set up in monument on this site about 1974 for the purpose of storing recreation equipment for employees.
14. Storage shed for maintenance area, pre-fabricated metal, rectangular, measuring about 12' x 15'.
15. Storage shed for maintenance area, pre-fabricated metal, rectangular, measuring about 12' x 15'.

*Significant: dating from the period of significance and retaining enough integrity to reflect original character.

*Supporting: more recent constructions not yet eligible for nomination to the National Register, but compatible in design and fabric to the historic architectural and landscaped setting. These constructions are evaluated as non-contributing to the historic district because they do not date from the period of significance.

*Non-contributing: post-dating the period of significance and visually intrusive to the historic character of the district.

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1. George L. Collins and Charles A. Richey to Mr. Maier,
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2. Photograph files, White Sands National Monument, and New Mexico State Museum Photo Archives, Santa Fe; Building Files, NPS Southwest Regional Office, Santa Fe; Office of Deputy Chief Architect, Branch of Plans and Design, Western Division, San Francisco, "Specifications for Comfort Station and Utility Building, Recreational Demonstration Project LD-NM-14," April 24, 1936, p. 3, p. 10, Building Files, NPS SWRO, Santa Fe.

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White Sands National Monument was established by executive proclamation of President Herbert Hoover on January 18, 1933 to preserve the most significant portion of the world's largest gypsum dune field. Its establishment had been preceded by years of effort on the part of citizens of southern New Mexico to have the dunes included in the National Park System.

The development of the monument visitor facilities occurred during the Depression years. As a result of the economic and social conditions of the times, the design and construction of the headquarters buildings evolved through the cooperative efforts of the National Park Service professional staff, the administrators and workers of the federal Public Works programs, and the citizen supporters.

White Sands National Monument was placed under the jurisdiction of Frank Pinkley, Superintendent of the Southwestern National Monuments, stationed in Coolidge, Arizona. In 1933, Tom Charles, leader of the citizen movement to establish the monument and resident of the nearby town of Alamogordo, was appointed Monument Custodian at a salary of \$1.00 a year. He held this position until 1939, during which time he assisted and influenced the construction programs. Tom Charles was called the "Father of the White Sands Monument."¹

Landscape Architect Charles A. Richey of the Western Division Branch of Plans and Design in San Francisco was assigned to direct the landscaping and the layout of buildings and improvements at White Sands. Personal input was also given to layout and construction by Frank A. Kittredge, Chief of the Branch of Engineering, and W. G. Attwell, Associate Engineer. NPS Regional Landscape Architect H. Cornell also participated in the preparation of plans for development.²

The Master Plan for the original development at White Sands was finalized in 1936 under the direction of W. G. Carnes, Deputy Chief Architect of the Branch of Plans and Design, Western Division, in San Francisco. The buildings were primarily designed by NPS architects Lyle E. Bennett and Robert W. Albers who were attached to the same division. However, other NPS specialists made preliminary contributions to architectural planning for White Sands. Their input is contained in a report of January 1, 1935 entitled "Proposed Museum and Administration

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Building, White Sands National Monument," which was submitted to Superintendent Frank Pinkley by Ansel F. Hall, Chief of the Field Division of Education. Sketches with this report show that the Pueblo Revival Style of architecture had already been chosen for the buildings.³

Funds, labor, and construction materials for development at White Sands came from the Civil Works Administration program for "relief of distress and suffering among the needy." Financing and labor was allocated at sudden intervals, and the NPS professionals rushed to provide supervision for each project. The first improvement at White Sands was made in 1934 with the grading by the CWA of a nine-mile-long road from the recently constructed Alamogordo-Las Cruces Highway (U. S. 70) into the heart of the dunes. The road work employed 104 workmen, 24 horses, and 12 trucks under the direction of Foreman H. B. "Hub" Chase.⁴

Immediately after the opening of automobile access into the dunes, visitors began to penetrate the dunes in droves and problems began to arise. Custodian Tom Charles began a series of appeals to Superintendent Pinkley and other officials for wells for drinking water, a cold drink stand, toilets, and shelters. "I cannot believe that the U. S. Park Service is going to let these people, sick and old and babes in arms, to swelter in the broiling sun. . . ." he wrote. The NPS realized that sanitation and health were matters of immediate concern, and responded with a few temporary comfort stations and brush and log ramadas. These structures, which were erected by the CWA, are no longer extant.⁵

Meanwhile, plans were being drawn for permanent structures. The selection of the site for the headquarters buildings was the matter of first concern, and disputes arose. Landscape Architect Charles Richey and Chief Engineer Frank Kittredge favored placing the visitor center in or near the dunes. Superintendent Pinkley, Custodian Charles, and others, favored a location on the public highway in order to more easily attract and serve visitors. Pinkley asked Charles to attempt to influence Richey in favor of a highway location. Tom Charles responded to Pinkley that he "did not have much luck."

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Chuck is an ardent advocate of the split skirt idea. Just a glimpse at a time for him. He thinks that all we should show up at the highway is a checking station and an ordinary ranger. The first peep at the real show, according to Chuck, should be at the entrance into the Sands where he would present a nice parking area with rest rooms and shelter, a Museum with Indian artifacts in White Sands products, paint burros, white mice, long hooped antelope, and a custodian. Next in Chuck's climax would be the Sands themselves; out where the snow white hills climb higher and higher as far as the eye can see. Even these hills he would use as suggestive of what there is beyond. The end of the road would circle a large sand dune and on the leeward side of a big white bluff, he would establish a second parking place with rest rooms and picnic grounds. But if John Public thinks the White Sands is his, when he arrives at this point, he is doomed to disappointment. Chuck still holds him back. He circles about him with a deep ditch and a ridge of sand quite impassable to cars and Mr. Man must climb these hills on foot.⁶

There was concern that a visitor center erected in the dunes might be covered up by the shifting sands, and ultimately, a highway location was chosen for the headquarters site. The frontal positioning of the museum building in relation to the highway and the wing-like spreading on either side of the maintenance and residential complexes ~~reflect the intention~~ of the architects to design a show-piece that would catch the eye of the passing motorist.⁷

The first buildings constructed were, in answer to the most immediate needs, a comfort station and a utility building-garage (Building #31B). They were built in 1936-7 as a project of the Recreational Demonstration Projects Administration. During several subsequent years, construction continued at White Sands with funds and labor provided by the same program. Workers were taken to the nearby mountains to cut timber for vigas (log ceiling beams), latias (aspen saplings to be laid cross-wise over the ceiling beams), and canales (roof drain spouts of halved hollow logs). The workers also made the adobe

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bricks with which the buildings were to be constructed. Tom Charles sent samples of bricks made with various mixtures of clay and white sand from the gypsum dunes in the monument to the NPS architects and engineers for testing. While most of the labor provided by the public works program was unskilled, some workers produced the finely crafted New Mexican Colonial Style furniture, architectural wood carvings, and cut-and-hammered-tin light fixtures. These decorative features were designed by the NPS architects, in particular Lyle Bennett.⁸

The principal architects for White Sands, Lyle E. Bennett and Robert W. Albers, had produced other notable designs for the NPS in the Pueblo Revival Style, such as buildings at Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico and Casa Grande National Monument in Arizona. These buildings had also been constructed with public works funds and labor.⁹

Even as modern architecture in the United States adapted to industrialization, the relief work programs of the Depression put masses of the unemployed to work at hand labor on architectural projects. The public work programs gave new life to historic revival styles which utilized traditional building materials and techniques of pre-industrial America. The National Parks benefited by the numerous laborers made available to carry out "rustic" designs. In answer to the standards then set by the NPS, hand labor could give to the buildings "the feeling of having been executed by pioneer craftsmen with limited hand tools" and thus achieve "sympathy with natural surroundings and with the past."¹⁰

In southwestern parks, designs derived from Indian and Spanish architecture were often put to use. The popular Pueblo Revival Style, based on Indian pueblos of the Southwest, originated in commercial and domestic architecture in the 1890s.

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Frequently, as at White Sands, buildings of the style combined elements derived from both Indian and Spanish colonial architecture. Many motifs, such as vigas and latias and flat roofs were common to both, but many features, such as decorative corbels (zapatas) and other ornate carvings, were derived from Spanish architecture. For this reason, the term Spanish-Pueblo Revival Style is sometimes used to describe buildings such as those at White Sands.

Appropriately, the White Sands Museum and Administration Building surpasses in design and decorative detail that of the ancillary headquarters buildings. Because of its size, it was designed by Lyle Bennett to be built by stages of construction as funds and labor were available. The modular character of pueblo architecture, as developed by the prehistoric Indians, lends itself to building by accretion. Thus, the Museum and Administration Building was constructed in three adjoining units during 1936-7, and a subsequent addition was built, but a sense of completeness was always maintained in the structure. Both in exterior and interior treatment, the building ranks as a notable example of the Pueblo Revival Style.¹¹

The last visitor facility to be added to the headquarters area at White Sands was the concessionaire's shop, in a rear workroom of the Museum and Administration Building. Ever lamenting the plight of the tourist, Custodian Tom Charles wrote to Superintendent Pinkley in 1939 that the visitor to White Sands could find "no place to get a drink, nothing to eat, no gas, not even colored glasses, or post cards or pictures." In the same year, Charles resigned his position as custodian and was authorized by the NPS to open the concession facility in the workroom. The shop space was enlarged by a visually compatible addition in 1964.¹²

The maintenance buildings exhibit simplicity of design and detail reminiscent of rural vernacular buildings of the Southwest. The residences, all designed by Lyle Bennett, display more sophisticated style and embellishment, although the overall tone of simplicity is maintained. The residence identified by the NPS as Building #3 was the last building erected at White Sands by the CWA workers, in 1938-9. The workers continued to be employed at interior and grounds work for a year or two after all the buildings had been erected. No CWA structural work outside of the headquarters area

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survives.¹³

The cohesive harmony of the whole assemblage of buildings, set amidst landscaped native plantings, does not betray the spasmodic schedule of construction work that completed the headquarters area. The work was funded at intervals and divided into "Jobs" to which gangs of more than 100 men would be trucked and for which materials needed to be immediately procured. The State Administrator for the Works Progress Administration, Fred G. Healy, praised Custodian Tom Charles and the workers for the construction at White Sands in a letter of December 4, 1937:

Sometime ago, I took the occasion to visit the scene of your operations, and I want to compliment you and the men working on the project for the splendid work that they have performed. The adobes used in the buildings are some of the finest I have ever seen, and the architectural lines and entire lay-out is a splendid exhibition of what can really be accomplished with a little thought and effort.¹⁴

Although improvements were begun at White Sands National Monument as early as 1934, the significant components of the proposed district are the buildings and landscaped features constructed and laid out between 1936 and 1940. These buildings and features are evaluated as the "Significant" contributing elements of the district even though most are less than 50 years old, because they are good examples of Civil Works Administration and Recreation Demonstration Project Administration construction of the Depression Era, and because they are part of National Park Service stylistic architectural development prior to World War II. The buildings evaluated as "Significant" have received some alterations, but they retain enough integrity to reflect their original architectural character.

Those buildings and landscaped features not yet 50 years old and not erected by the Public Works programs, and therefore not eligible for nomination to the National Register, but compatible in design and fabric with the historic architectural and landscaped setting, are evaluated as "Supporting." These

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buildings and features are integrated with the visual and physical historic setting. Nevertheless, these "Supporting" buildings do not contribute to the historic character of the district and are evaluated as "Non-contributing."

Visually intrusive structures, not compatible in design and fabric with the historic character of the setting, are also evaluated as "Non-contributing."

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The boundaries of the proposed White Sands National Monument Historic District are drawn to include the eight significant buildings and various associated significant landscape constructions and plantings at the Headquarters Area of White Sands National Monument.

The boundaries start at a point on the northwest side of U. S. Highway 70/82, 700 feet northeast of the present Monument entrance road. From this point, the boundary moves in a southwest direction along the northwest side of the highway for 1100 feet. At this point, the boundary turns northwest and runs for 600 feet. At this point, the boundary turns northeast and proceeds for 1100 feet. At this point, the boundary turns and runs for 600 feet to the starting point on the highway.

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 88000751

Date Listed: 6/23/88

White Sands National Monument Hist. Dist. Otero
Property Name County

NM
State

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Beth Boland

Signature of the Keeper

6/23/88

Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

- 1) Add one contributing site to the count (landscaping)
- 2) Period of Significance is 1936 - 1940

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)